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# The Chat

Vol. 76

WINTER 2012

No. 1



The Quarterly Bulletin of the Carolina Bird Club, Inc.  
The Ornithological Society of the Carolinas

# THE CHAT

ISSN No. 0009-1987

Vol. 76

WINTER 2012

No. 1

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THE CHAT is published quarterly by the Carolina Bird Club, Inc., 1809 Lakepark Drive, Raleigh NC 27612. Subscription price \$30 per year. Periodicals postage paid at Wilmington, NC and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE CHAT, Carolina Bird Club, Inc., 6236 Teal St. Unit 8-D, Wilmington, NC 28403.

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## 2011 Annual Report of the North Carolina Bird Records Committee

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**Michael Tove<sup>1</sup>, Chair, Keith Camburn, Ricky Davis, Eric Dean, Wayne Forsythe, Harry LeGrand, Jr., Jeff Pippen**

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The year 2011 saw two notable changes in the North Carolina Bird Records Committee. First, after many years of superlative leadership as the Committee's chair, Harry LeGrand stepped down, passing the baton to Michael Tove, though LeGrand remains on the Committee. Second, two members left the Committee, reducing it from nine to seven members.

The NCBRC received 25 reports of 22 species. The reference number (in parentheses) reflects the year reported and sequence in which the report was received. Only reports receiving one or more accept votes are listed herein.

### Accepted as Valid

These reports included sufficient documentation to warrant acceptance of the bird as reported. When a species has been documented by specimen, photographs, or three written reports of different occurrences, it is placed on the state's Official List. When a species is documented by fewer than three accepted written reports without recognizable photos or a specimen, it is placed on the Provisional List.

**Mottled Duck** (*Anas fulvigula*) (11-13). A single individual reported by Dwayne Martin was seen by many observers and photographed at Riverbend Park in northern Catawba County in July 2011. The report was unanimously accepted. There are several previous records from the state, including some supported by photographs. Although the species is already on the Official List, this is the first record from the piedmont.

**Common Merganser** (*Mergus merganser*) (11-19). This is a regular wintering species in North Carolina and normally requires no review by the Records Committee. However, the Committee received a report of breeding which is highly significant as this is only the second time it has been documented in the state. In this case, multiple individuals and crèches of up to sixteen individuals (adult females and chicks) were seen and photographed during the spring and summer seasons from 2008–2011 along the Green River (Polk County) by Zora L. Rhodes and Jerry L. Johnson. The Committee evaluated the photographs and accompanying paper (Rhodes and Johnson, 2012). Based on this documentation, the report was unanimously accepted.

**Great Blue Heron (white morph)** (*Ardea herodias*) (11-21). An individual of the morph commonly known as "Great White Heron" was photographed along the Eno River (Durham County) by Kathy Lee on 18

November 2011 and seen and subsequently photographed by many others thereafter. This recognized color morph of Great Blue Heron has been documented previously in the state by at least two to three records each from the coastal plain, piedmont, and mountains. However, the present sighting appears to be the first photographically documented record from the piedmont. Based on these photos, the report was unanimously accepted. This record provides no change in status for either the species or the form.

**White-faced Ibis** (*Plegadis chihi*) (11-11). A bird was seen at Lake Mattamuskeet (Hyde County) on 28 April 2011 by David A. Clark. It was not relocated and no photographs were obtained. The written report was unanimously accepted. This is the second record from the state, the first being a well-seen and photographed individual from South Nags Head in July 2002. The species is already on the Official List.

**Hudsonian Godwit** (*Limosa haemastica*) (11-15). An individual photographed on 27 August 2011 by Andrew Scaboo at Lake Wheeler, Raleigh (Wake County) was unanimously accepted. The species is expected at this time of year but the inland location and first Wake County record were significant.

**Common Murre** (*Uria aalge*) (11-02, 11-03, 11-04). Three separate reports of four birds, all from pelagic trips in January 2011 out of Hatteras (Dare County) occurred in connection with a massive alcid invasion. All four birds were documented by photographs including two birds on the 15th (11-02 by Brian Patteson) and one bird each on the 28th (11-03 by Jeff Lemons) and 29th (11-04 by Chris Sloan). All three reports were accepted (by 7, 6, 7 votes respectively). There are two previous records, including photographs from the state. The species is currently on the Official List.

**Long-billed Murrelet** (*Brachyramphus perdix*) (11-12). A moribund individual was found at Emerald Isle (Carteret County) on 29 April 2011. The specimen was delivered to the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences. The Committee was able to view photographs of the specimen and unanimously accepted the record. There are two previous sight records from the state, neither of which is supported by photographs or specimens. Based on the specimen and photographs, this species is added to the Official List.

**Cypseloides, sp. Swift** (11-16). A single individual seen by Derb Carter at Hemphill Bald along the eastern border of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park (Haywood County) on 19 September 2011 was identified as a Black Swift (*C. niger*). It was not seen after this date and was not photographed. This report generated some discussion as to which species or even subspecies might have been involved. Four members accepted the report as *Cypseloides, sp.* but not to species; three accepted it as *C. niger*. While the Committee was generally united in its belief that Black Swift (*C. niger*) was the most reasonable possibility, the majority felt that without physical evidence to support a specific identification, acceptance to genus only was more appropriate. At least one Committee member noted that there are two distinct populations of *C. niger*; one from the western United States and one from the Caribbean which may in the future be split. A logical guess

would be that Carter's bird came from the Caribbean—presumably as fallout from Hurricane Lee, but there is no way to know. This is the first record of the genus from North Carolina and it is added to the Provisional List as *Cypseloides* sp.

**Anna's Hummingbird** (*Calypte anna*) (11-01, 11-23). An adult male at New Bern (Craven County) from 17 January to 11 February 2011 was accepted based on a series of photographs from multiple observers. An adult male was banded in New Bern by Susan Campbell on 12 November 2011 at the exact same location as the previous bird. Campbell reported that it was very likely the same individual. Five members agreed that both records refer to the same individual bird; two members expressed no opinion either way. Therefore, collectively both reports constitute the second record from the state, the first being an immature male at Charlotte from 29 November 1998 to 4 March 1999. That individual was documented by photographs, placing the species on the Official List. The present record represents the first from the coastal plain but otherwise provides no change to status of the species in the state.

**Allen's Hummingbird** (*Selasphorus sasin*) (11-22). An adult male was caught and banded by Dwayne Martin and photographed by Michael McCloy on 19 November 2011 at Riverbend Park (Catawba County). The bird was subsequently seen and photographed by numerous observers. Based on the photographic evidence, this record was unanimously accepted. There is one previous record from the state; an immature male photographed at Manteo (Dare County) during the winter of 2003. The species is currently on the Official List.

**Fork-tailed Flycatcher** (*Tyrannus savana*) (11-09). An adult was photographed near Wagram by John Haire on 25 April 2011 while he was watching the Cassin's Sparrow (see 11-08 below). Based on the photographs, this report was unanimously accepted. The species is already on the Official List from two previous records from the coast. This constitutes the first inland record.

**Violet-green Swallow** (*Tachycineta thalassina*) (11-17). The Committee received two reports of this species, both seen by single observers on 1 October 2011. The first (11-17) was seen and photographed in Chapel Hill (Orange County) by Ali Iyob. This report was unanimously accepted. The second (11-18) was not photographed and did not receive sufficient votes for acceptance (see below). This species was previously unrecorded from the state. Based on the photograph and written report by Iyob alone, this species is added to the Official List.

**Chestnut-collared Longspur** (*Calcarius ornatus*) (11-10). A basic plumaged adult female was photographed at Fort Fisher (New Hanover County) on 23 April 2011 by Bruce Young and on 25 April by Greg Massey and Harry Sell. Based on written reports by Young and Massey and photographs by Young, Massey and Sell, this record was unanimously accepted. The species is already on the Official List with two previous

records, one with photos. However, this is the first record from the coastal plain.

**Cassin's Sparrow** (*Peucaea cassinii*) (11-08). A skylarking and singing adult male was discovered by Gil Miller on 20 April 2011 near Wagram in the Sandhills Game Land, northern Scotland County, and it continued through at least May 6. Based on written reports by Miller and Harry LeGrand plus many photographs and song recordings from multiple observers, this report was unanimously accepted. This is a first record of the species from the state and is placed on the Official List.

### Unaccepted Sighting

The following sightings, while sufficiently documented to warrant consideration and acceptance by at least one Committee member, received a majority of non-accept votes and were not accepted.

**Clark's Grebe** (*Aechmophorus clarkii*) (11-25) A single bird reported from Dare County was judged to be inadequately documented (three members) or misidentified (two members) and was not accepted.

**Little Stint** (*Calidris minuta*) (11-14). A single bird was reported from New Hanover County, but the written description and photographs were somewhat inconsistent with each other and ultimately inconclusive. In light of the challenges of peep identification and rarity of the species in North America, six members felt the report was inadequately documented to be acceptable.

**Violet-green Swallow** (*Tachycineta thalassina*) (11-18). A single bird was reported from Durham County on the same day as the bird documented from Chapel Hill (11-17). This report received four non-accept votes and three to accept. What concerned the Committee was that this report seemed to have been spurred by the former through the power of suggestion.

The Committee also received five reports which either failed to meet minimum criteria to be judged or were unanimously judged to be unaccepted sightings. To minimize introduction into the literature of those reports, including species previously unrecorded from the state, no further citation will be made.

### Unresolved

Howell (2012) includes a photo (p.189) of a bird from 16 September 1995 off Hatteras (Dare County), NC that he states is a Zino's Petrel. This is the same bird that appears on the Brian Patteson, Inc. seabird website (in two images) listed as "?Zino's Petrel." Neither claim was submitted to the NC BRC (nor to our knowledge, any Records Committee) and Zino's Petrel is not accepted to the State List. Because the Patteson Seabirds website is private and not a refereed scientific publication, and his photos were accompanied by the "?" hedge, the NC BRC felt no need to review the claim. However, with Howell's publication of this identification as a statement of fact, circumstances have changed. The Committee will review



the photographs and any written description that might still exist and report its determination in the 2012 report.

## Discussion

With this round of voting, Violet-green Swallow and Cassin's Sparrow are added to the Official List, Long-billed Murrelet is elevated from the Provisional to the Official List and *Cypseloides* sp. is added to the Provisional List. Accordingly, the accepted State List is increased to 473, of which 461 species are on the Official List and 12 on the Provisional List.

As is always the case, observers of rare species, particularly if their report would constitute a first state record, would do well to invest a reasonable amount of time properly documenting the bird to the best extent possible. Of the 17 reports that were accepted, only two were not accompanied by photographs. In both those cases, extensive field notes made either at the time of the sighting or immediately afterward were provided. Of the eight reports not accepted, only one included photographs and thorough written documentation.

Too often, observers forget that the burden of proof is theirs to prove the claim, not the Committee's to disprove it. We are aware and sensitive to the fact that at times we may fail to accept reports of species which were correctly identified. However, the Committee is tasked with the responsibility of only accepting reports that can be sustained by the evidence provided. Accordingly, the following guidelines are offered to anyone fortunate enough to discover a bird of sufficient rarity to warrant submission:

1. Obtain high-quality digital photographs if at all possible.
2. Whether photographed or not, take exhaustive notes on all field marks seen, ideally *with the bird in view* or at the first possible opportunity thereafter. Record everything you can think of—even if you are uncertain it is important.
3. Get the word out fast so others can see the bird and confirm the identification.
4. Do your homework. Double check your notes for accuracy and consistency with the expected.
5. Be honest with yourself. The only aspect of a sighting that improves with time is "memory enhancement." Do not submit a formal report for an identification for which you are initially uncertain unless it is later verified. Of course, there is a big difference between broadcasting your suspected sighting to get the word out and submitting a formal report for Committee consideration.
6. Write your report as soon as possible. Describe in great detail everything you saw but only what you saw. Generally, the rarer the bird, the more detail is warranted and remember to describe the *bird*; not people, places or things. Both a downloadable Rare Bird Report form and an online Rare Bird Report form are available from the Carolina Bird Club website at <http://www.carolinabirdclub.org/brc/>.

Finally, observers are encouraged to refer to the new online reference “Birds of North Carolina: Their Distribution and Abundance” by Harry LeGrand, John Haire, Ali Iyob and Tom Howard which can be accessed via the Carolina Bird Club web site. The official checklist of species from North Carolina may be found on the Carolina Bird Club website at [www.carolinabirdclub.org/brc/checklist\\_of\\_North\\_Carolina\\_birds.html](http://www.carolinabirdclub.org/brc/checklist_of_North_Carolina_birds.html).

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Howell, S. N. G. 2012. Petrels, Albatrosses, & Storm-Petrels of North America: A Photographic Guide. Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ.

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*Received 30 January 2012*



## 2011 Annual Report of the South Carolina Bird Records Committee

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**Irvin Pitts<sup>1</sup>, Chair, Giff Beaton, Lex Glover, Chris Hill,  
J.B. Hines III, Will Post, Steve Wagner**

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In 2011, the South Carolina Bird Records Committee completed action on 19 records of which 12 were accepted, four rejected, and three left unresolved, with the decisions on these pending outside review. Committee actions in 2011 resulted in the placement of two new species on the Main List, both of these birds having been previously categorized as Hypothetical. These two species are Ash-throated Flycatcher, elevated to Definitive status, and Alder Flycatcher, elevated to Provisional I. With these changes, South Carolina's Main List now stands at 427 species, not including those 16 birds categorized as Provisional II species and 12 others classified as Hypothetical. The most recent revision of the state list can be found online at <http://www.carolinabirdclub.org/brc>. The state list available online includes review categories in addition to list categories for each species.

In October 2011, Donna Slyce stepped down as committee chair and was replaced by Irvin Pitts. The remaining committee membership was unchanged, and the committee still consists of seven people. The committee expresses its sincere thanks to Donna for her 10 years of excellent service, and for her dedication and professionalism demonstrated as Chair.

### Accepted Reports:

**American White Pelican** (11-11-10). A report submitted by Peter Keller of a single bird on 3 November 2011 at the Bluff Unit of the Santee National Wildlife Refuge, Clarendon County was unanimously accepted. A flock of 20+ American White Pelicans was observed by a number of folks in the Cantey Bay area during the winter months of 2011–2012 and was still present as of 18 February. This species now occurs quite regularly in the coastal counties, though it is still considered to be a review species 30 miles inland.

**Black-headed Gull** (10-10-05). A report submitted by Bill Boyle of a molting adult bird found standing among a group of gulls on the beach at Kiawah Island, Charleston County on 10 October 2011 was unanimously accepted. This record constitutes the ninth report of this species in the state, with the previous early date being 29 October.

**Iceland Gull** (02-05-16). A well-written report submitted by Steve Calver and accompanied by an excellent set of digital photos of a second-year bird on 25 February 2005 at the Savannah Harbor spoil area, Jasper County was unanimously accepted. This species was first added to the state's

Definitive list on 14 January 1985 (Post and Belser 1985), and this report constitutes the third accepted record since then.

**Arctic Tern** (05-10-03). For the second straight year, the committee received an Arctic Tern report for review. This well-documented report, submitted by Wendy and Dennis Allen, was of two birds seen and photographed on 16 May 2010, nine miles southeast of Winyah Bay. It was unanimously accepted. This report constitutes the third record of this species with supporting physical evidence since 2004, all from the month of May. The Arctic Tern was first placed on the state's Provisional List by a narrowly accepted committee vote in 1993, this record being of a bird observed offshore from Charleston on 16 May 1992.

**Dovekie** (02-11-02). The committee unanimously accepted a report and photos submitted by Ritch Lilly of a bird found resting on the beach near the jetty at Huntington Beach State Park, Georgetown County on 2 February 2011. This record constitutes the third report of this species accepted by the committee and the second one documented by photographs.

**Alder Flycatcher** (09-09-07). A well-written report submitted by Chris Snook of a bird banded on 16 September 2009 at Folly Island, Charleston County was unanimously accepted. The committee based its decision on the report's detailed descriptions of body measurements and references to Pyle's (1997) work. The species is elevated to the Provisional I category of the main state list. The status of this flycatcher as a fall migrant has been uncertain due to the great difficulty in making accurate field identification without reference to vocalizations and to the absence of records detailing such closely-studied birds as this one.

**Vermilion Flycatcher** (10-11-09). A report and photograph submitted by Irvin Pitts of an immature male observed by Nathan Dias, John Cox, and himself at the Pine Island Unit of Santee National Wildlife Refuge, Clarendon County on 22 October, 2011 was accepted, with the reporting member abstaining. This species occurs as a very rare but regular visitor to the state and there have been at least nine other records of its occurrence, including two previously acted on by the Committee.

**Ash-throated Flycatcher** (01-11-01). A very detailed report accompanied by excellent digital photos was submitted by James Flynn, Jr. of a bird at the Savannah Harbor spoil area, Jasper County on 15 January 2011. This report was unanimously accepted, constituting the first accepted record with photographic evidence, thus elevating this species to the Definitive category on the main state list.

**Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** (06-10-04). A report of a successful nesting pair near the town of Piedmont was unanimously accepted. This report, submitted by Paul Serridge, was accompanied by a series of excellent photographs and a well-detailed log describing observations by members of the Greenville County Bird Club during the period of 15 June through 30 August 2010. The birds were first reported by Lorraine Brown on 14 June. Though this species now occurs regularly in the state during the summer months, particularly in the lower piedmont region, very few successful

breeding records have been documented. The first nesting in the state was verified at Young's Community in Laurens County in 1982.

**Bell's Vireo** (09-11-08). A report submitted by Aaron Given of a hatch-year bird banded at Kiawah Island, Charleston County on 17 September, 2011 was unanimously accepted. This report, providing wing and tail measurements and accompanied by a conclusive close-up digital photo, constitutes the fourth accepted record of this species in the state.

**Harris's Sparrow** (12-10-09). A report submitted with digital photos of a Harris's Sparrow at the home of Gene Ott in Laurens County near Waterloo was unanimously accepted. This bird was first observed at Mr. Ott's feeders on 6 December 2010 and remained until at least 1 May 2011. During this period it was observed and photographed by a number of people. This report constitutes the fifth documented report of this species in the state since 1962.

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak** (06-10-06). The committee, through a mixed vote, accepted the identity of two flighted young birds found by Marion Clark on 24 June 2010 in the Mountain Bridge Wilderness Area, Greenville County, near the summit of Standingstone Mountain. The committee felt, however, that because of close proximity to the North Carolina border, this evidence was not sufficient to constitute the state's first confirmed breeding record. This observation is the second report of this species from the mountains of Greenville County during the month of June, the first being of a singing male near Caesars Head on 19 June 1965 (Post and Gauthreaux 1989).

### **Non-accepted Reports:**

**Whooping Crane** (12-10-04). The identification of a bird videotaped with a small group of Sandhill Cranes in the upstate was deemed to be correct, but the report was rejected because of its unaccepted origin status.

**Spotted Redshank** (04-10-02). A report submitted of a bird observed near the coast was not accepted due primarily to the lack of substantiating details in the report. This species is currently placed on South Carolina's Hypothetical List.

**Ringed Kingfisher** (10-11-07). A brief report of a bird found near the coast was not accepted. The committee as a whole felt that the report's details did not sufficiently support the species identification. There have been no previously accepted records of this species in South Carolina.

**Scott's Oriole** (05-11-06). A report submitted with digital photos of a bird near the coast was not accepted. The majority of committee members felt that the evidence did not sufficiently support the species identification as reported. There have been no previously accepted records of this bird in South Carolina.



**Unresolved Reports:**

The following three records were submitted for outside review. The decision to circulate these reports to outside reviewers was made based on committee rules that dictate procedures resulting from close vote tallies. Further action by the committee will be taken on these records once outside comments are received and re-circulated to the committee members for a second vote. A final determination for each species' validity will be presented in the 2012 annual report.

**Western Grebe** (02-11-05). A report of two birds found near the coast was submitted to outside review, as required by committee rules. Previously, the records committee has accepted one other report of this species, a bird observed by many at Lake Wallace in Bennettsville, Marlboro County from August through October, 1999 (Glover et al. 2002).

**Great Skua** (02-11-03). A report of two Great Skuas sighted from shore at Huntington Beach was submitted to outside review, as required by committee rules. There have been no other previously accepted records of this species in South Carolina.

**Burrowing Owl** (07-10-08). A report and photograph of a bird found at the coast was submitted to outside review, as required by committee rules. The status of this species is already classified as Definitive on the state's main list.

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*Received 29 February 2012*

## **2011 Fall Bird Counts in South Carolina**

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Migration of fall 2011 held some interesting birds. A large number of hummingbirds, and both Calliope and Rufous Hummingbirds were seen as well. A total of 26 warbler species were seen throughout the state. One of the more unusual was a Canada Warbler in Aiken County as well as two individuals each in Greenville County and at Congaree National Park. Also two fall Blackpoll Warblers were noted in two counties. Overall only five species of sparrow were counted on all counts. A number of unusual shorebirds were found, mostly in Aiken County where water levels at the Silver Bluff Audubon Center were extremely low for an extended period of time. Buff-breasted Sandpiper, American Golden-Plover and Baird's Sandpiper were found in one pond there. A single Ring-necked Duck and Red-breasted Merganser were found in various counties and 26 Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks, including a number of immatures, were found in Aiken County. In addition both Philadelphia and Warbling Vireos were on the count as was an early Red-breasted Nuthatch.

### **Greenville—JB Hines**

The Greenville County 2011 Fall Migration Count was held on Saturday, September 17 and included the monthly GCBC walk at Lake Conestee. Weather conditions were decent this year with a low of 57 °F and a high of 67 °F under mostly clear skies and moderate wind. Nine parties/areas were covered by 18 participants. The group total was 110 species and 5431 individuals. In general this year's fall migration has been very good with excellent number of migrants showing up as early as late August and continuing through the end of September.

Notable species (rare/unusual, unusually high numbers, etc.): An average count of 675 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds was estimated at Judy and Charles Webb's feeders on Lake Lanier. They had estimated 600–750 based on the 2.5 gallons of nectar being consumed daily. They also had an early Calliope Hummingbird. A very good total of 19 species of warblers was recorded for this count.

### **Cherokee County—Lyle Campbell**

Best birds were a Tennessee Warbler and Rose-breasted Grosbeak.

### **Spartanburg County—Lyle Campbell**

Our two best birds were early Winter Wren and Red-breasted Nuthatch. We had a modest diversity of warblers with no unusual records. No Northern Bobwhite could be found. Perhaps the most peculiar aspect of our fall count was the extremely low numbers of blackbirds.

**Congaree—John Grego**

Participants included park staff and visitors. Areas covered were the boardwalk, Weston Lake, Oakridge and Bluff Trails as well as the longleaf campground, parts of Cedar Creek and the Congaree River, Bates Fork, and Western Boundary Roads. Weather was warm, light wind with some clouds and sun. The birders on the river added coverage that we do not typically have on Congaree National Park counts.

**Lexington—Patricia Voelker**

Our group concentrated on Saluda Shoals Park in Irmo but three of us also did feeder and/or stationary counts later in the day. Irvin Pitts heard the Marsh Wren in the area around the wetlands pond of the park. Sparkle Clark was able to get a digiscoped picture. Unfortunately for me, several of us had gone on to the rest room and missed the best bird of the day.

Table 1. Fall 2011 bird counts in South Carolina

	Aiken	Spart	Cherok	Lexing	Greenv	Congar	Total
Black-bellied Whistling-Duck	26	0	0	0	0	0	26
Canada Goose	46	335	54	0	107	0	542
Wood Duck	25	3	0	14	51	0	93
Mallard	1	156	1	8	56	0	222
Blue-winged Teal	0	1	0	0	2	0	3
Ring-necked Duck	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Red-breasted Merganser	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Northern Bobwhite	0	0	4	0	0	0	4
Ruffed Grouse	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Wild Turkey	14	12	20	0	13	0	59
Pied-billed Grebe	1	2	1	0	4	0	8
Wood Stork	36	0	0	0	0	4	40
Double-crested Cormorant	1	2	0	0	0	0	3
Anhinga	7	0	0	0	0	2	9
Great Blue Heron	6	25	2	1	10	11	55
Great Egret	12	5	1	0	1	6	25
Snowy Egret	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Little Blue Heron	17	0	0	0	0	6	23
Tricolored Heron	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Cattle Egret	37	0	0	0	0	0	37
Green Heron	1	8	0	0	5	1	15
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
White Ibis	17	0	0	0	0	20	37
Black Vulture	67	30	7	2	60	19	185
Turkey Vulture	29	37	8	2	82	26	184
Osprey	1	3	3	1	3	6	17
Bald Eagle	1	0	0	0	4	3	8
Northern Harrier	0	2	0	0	1	0	3
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	4	0	0	1	0	6
Cooper's Hawk	2	1	0	0	3	0	6
Red-shouldered Hawk	20	4	1	2	12	8	47
Broad-winged Hawk	0	0	0	0	18	0	18
Red-tailed Hawk	9	14	2	2	8	1	36
American Kestrel	2	1	3	0	0	0	6
Merlin	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Peregrine Falcon	0	0	0	0	1	1	2



	Aiken	Spart	Cherok	Lexing	Greenv	Congar	Total
Virginia Rail	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Common Gallinule	4	0	0	0	0	0	4
American Golden-Plover	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Killdeer	55	40	33	0	7	0	135
Spotted Sandpiper	1	1	1	0	0	1	4
Solitary Sandpiper	7	0	0	0	1	1	9
Lesser Yellowlegs	1	2	0	0	0	0	3
Ruddy Turnstone	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Western Sandpiper	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Least Sandpiper	95	0	0	0	0	0	95
Baird's Sandpiper	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Pectoral Sandpiper	20	0	0	0	0	0	20
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Short-billed Dowitcher	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Wilson's Snipe	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Forster's Tern	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Rock Pigeon	27	306	30	0	31	0	394
Eurasian Collared-Dove	5	13	0	1	0	0	19
White-winged Dove	157	0	0	17	0	0	174
Mourning Dove	0	195	65	0	174	14	448
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	2	0	0	3	0	20	25
Eastern Screech-Owl	3	1	2	0	10	0	16
Great Horned Owl	1	2	0	0	1	0	4
Barred Owl	6	7	1	1	2	10	27
Common Nighthawk	0	34	0	0	1	1	36
Chuck-will's-widow	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Chimney Swift	20	397	4	40	514	13	988
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	28	112	4	12	791	3	950
Calliope Hummingbird	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Rufous Hummingbird	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Belted Kingfisher	11	18	4	3	14	2	52
Red-headed Woodpecker	29	13	1	0	3	9	55
Red-bellied Woodpecker	45	36	17	13	57	24	192
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	2	2	0	0	0	0	4
Downy Woodpecker	29	23	4	10	47	17	130
Hairy Woodpecker	4	2	1	0	4	2	13
Red-cockaded Woodpecker	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
Northern Flicker	4	10	4	0	5	1	24
Pileated Woodpecker	36	7	2	3	18	51	117
Eastern Wood-Pewee	17	7	4	4	17	13	62
Acadian Flycatcher	4	0	1	0	0	13	18
Eastern Phoebe	12	14	12	5	29	0	72
Great Crested Flycatcher	7	0	0	0	2	2	11
Eastern Kingbird	2	4	0	1	0	1	8
Loggerhead Shrike	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
White-eyed Vireo	41	1	0	3	5	54	104
Yellow-throated Vireo	1	0	0	0	1	2	4
Blue-headed Vireo	1	0	0	0	3	0	4
Warbling Vireo	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Philadelphia Vireo	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Red-eyed Vireo	12	1	0	18	12	10	53
Blue Jay	60	86	35	5	118	19	323
American Crow	147	291	47	12	350	134	981
Fish Crow	8	1	2	0	7	2	20
Common Raven	0	0	0	0	3	0	3
Horned Lark	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Tree Swallow	55	0	0	0	0	0	55

	Aiken	Spart	Cherok	Lexing	Greenv	Congar	Total
Northern Rough-winged							
Swallow	21	0	0	0	0	5	26
Bank Swallow	0	0	0	0	0	51	51
Barn Swallow	10	3	0	2	0	0	15
Carolina Chickadee	80	69	18	32	190	26	415
Tufted Titmouse	104	62	19	25	183	27	420
Red-breasted Nuthatch	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
White-breasted Nuthatch	11	21	2	0	73	7	114
Brown-headed Nuthatch	28	14	4	12	26	0	84
Brown Creeper	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Carolina Wren	85	73	26	21	126	36	367
House Wren	2	2	0	0	1	0	5
Winter Wren	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Marsh Wren	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	8	0	0	3	3	0	14
Eastern Bluebird	31	127	28	23	277	2	488
Veery	2	0	0	0	1	27	30
Swainson's Thrush	3	0	0	0	5	7	15
Hermit Thrush	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
Wood Thrush	0	0	0	0	5	3	8
American Robin	0	181	14	0	81	2	278
Gray Catbird	2	9	2	1	14	0	28
Northern Mockingbird	65	87	26	15	55	1	249
Brown Thrasher	4	14	7	3	23	1	52
European Starling	122	267	38	0	392	0	819
Cedar Waxwing	0	0	0	10	25	0	35
Ovenbird	0	0	0	0	2	2	4
Worm-eating Warbler	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
Louisiana Waterthrush	5	0	0	0	0	0	5
Northern Waterthrush	1	0	0	1	1	1	4
Blue-winged Warbler	2	0	0	0	0	1	3
Black-and-white Warbler	13	0	0	1	8	4	26
Tennessee Warbler	2	0	1	0	25	0	28
Common Yellowthroat	16	1	0	12	15	13	57
Hooded Warbler	7	0	0	1	8	7	23
American Redstart	35	7	4	18	27	34	125
Cape May Warbler	0	0	0	0	4	0	4
Northern Parula	28	4	0	5	1	30	68
Magnolia Warbler	4	0	3	1	13	8	29
Bay-breasted Warbler	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Yellow Warbler	0	1	0	0	2	0	3
Chestnut-sided Warbler	13	1	1	3	13	4	35
Blackpoll Warbler	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Black-throated Blue Warbler	1	0	0	0	6	9	16
Palm Warbler	8	6	0	0	14	0	28
Pine Warbler	59	10	7	5	12	3	96
Yellow-rumped Warbler	0	21	0	0	0	0	21
Yellow-throated Warbler	3	0	0	0	0	2	5
Prairie Warbler	1	0	0	3	0	0	4
Black-throated Green Warbler	0	0	1	0	4	0	5
Canada Warbler	1	0	0	0	2	2	5
Yellow-breasted Chat	0	1	0	0	0	4	5
Eastern Towhee	19	11	2	1	17	3	53
Chipping Sparrow	7	58	6	9	55	0	135
Field Sparrow	0	12	0	0	26	0	38

	Aiken	Spart	Cherok	Lexing	Greenv	Congar	Total
Grasshopper Sparrow	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Song Sparrow	0	18	2	0	12	0	32
Dark-eyed Junco	0	1	0	0	9	0	10
Summer Tanager	26	1	0	1	1	15	44
Scarlet Tanager	1	0	0	0	5	3	9
Northern Cardinal	171	142	27	33	147	78	598
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	0	0	2	2	3	0	7
Blue Grosbeak	6	1	1	2	6	5	21
Indigo Bunting	11	0	0	5	20	15	51
Bobolink	0	0	0	0	55	1	56
Red-winged Blackbird	11	1	1	0	0	0	13
Eastern Meadowlark	1	5	5	0	1	0	12
Common Grackle	82	22	7	0	544	4	659
Brown-headed Cowbird	457	2	4	0	5	0	468
Baltimore Oriole	0	0	0	0	4	2	6
Purple Finch	0	7	0	0	0	0	7
House Finch	6	90	15	15	40	0	166
American Goldfinch	22	59	13	6	118	0	218
House Sparrow	1	21	19	0	44	0	85

Received 19 February 2012

## Fifty Years Ago in *The Chat*—March 1962

There were 24 Christmas Bird Counts in 1961, and a new high overall species count of 193 was reached. Of the near 2.5 million individuals counted, a million were European Starlings and more than a million were blackbirds. Bewick's Wrens were reported on the Chapel Hill, Winston-Salem, and Great Smoky Mountains counts, a Western Grebe on the Raleigh count, and a Broad-winged Hawk on the Charleston count. A Harlequin Duck on the Wilmington count was a first record for the state.

Besides the Raleigh Western Grebe, there was a report of one at North Pond, Pea Island NWR on 30 March 1959. These were the first two records for the state.

A Harris's Sparrow at Spartanburg, SC in January 1962, seen by many, was apparently the state's first sight record.

—Kent Fiala, editor



## General Field Notes

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*General Field Notes briefly report such items as rare sightings, unusual behaviors, significant nesting records, or summaries of such items.*

*First, second, or third sightings of species in either state must be submitted to the appropriate Bird Records Committee prior to publication in The Chat.*

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### **Black-bellied Whistling-Duck Nest in the Santee Delta-Winyah Bay Area of South Carolina**

**Jamie Dozier**

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The breeding range of the Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) has historically been South and Central America, Mexico, southern Arizona and Texas (Palmer 1976). The eastern and northern expansion of the Black-bellied Whistling-Duck along the Atlantic coast of the United States has been observed in recent years. Potential breeding success was reported in southern Florida near West Palm Beach in May 1988 when one adult and an immature were observed (Stevenson and Anderson 1994). Nesting was documented in northern Florida in Hamilton County in October, 1997 (Bergstrom 1999). The first accepted record in Georgia was in June 1998 in Clayton County (Bergstrom 1999).

The Black-bellied Whistling-Duck is a relative newcomer to South Carolina. It was considered Provisional II on the 1989 official state list (Post and Gauthreaux 1989). The status was changed to Definitive on the 2003 state list (South Carolina Bird Records Committee 2004). A record from Lee County does appear in 1977, but this was assumed to be an escaped captive individual (Martin 1984). The first documented wild record of Black-bellied Whistling-Duck in South Carolina occurred in 1994 when two individuals were observed and photographed in the ACE Basin at Donnelley Wildlife Management Area (DWMA) (Harrigal et al. 1995). The first documented nesting record in South Carolina also occurred at DWMA when an adult was observed with ducklings in the summer of 2003 and again in 2004 (Harrigal and Cely 2005).

The Black-bellied Whistling-Duck was first observed at the Tom Yawkey Wildlife Center (TYWC) in Georgetown County in September 2008 when five individuals were observed feeding in a brackish managed wetland

(Dozier pers. obs.) on Cat Island. Since that time, Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks have been observed on numerous occasions on TYWC and numbers appear to be increasing and occurring in every season. In 2009 a Black-bellied Whistling-Duck was observed during the count week (December 14–18) of the Christmas Bird Count. The highest number observed occurred in October 2010 when 40 Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks were feeding in a brackish managed wetland on the South Island portion of the TYWC (Dozier pers. obs.)

On 5 June 2011, Bryan Reece, TYWC Natural Resource Technician, observed three pairs of Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks in the Lower Hume Pond and Summer Duck Pond. These ponds are adjacent to each other on the Cat Island portion of the TYWC. On 2 July 2011, a Black-bellied Whistling-Duck with 12 ducklings was observed and photographed (Fig. 1) by Dozier in the Lower Hume Pond area of Cat Island (N33.21075°, W79.26611°). This is the northernmost observation of nesting along the east coast and the first record of nesting in the Santee Delta–Winyah Bay region.



Figure 1. Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) with ducklings in the Hume Pond of the Tom Yawkey Wildlife Center, Georgetown, SC. Photo taken 2 July 2007.

The Hume Pond is a 17-acre freshwater pond and wetland embedded in a managed complex of brackish former rice fields. The pond contains areas of dense mats of aquatic vegetation such as duckweed (*Lemna sp.*), alligator weed (*Alternanthera philoxeroides*), and fragrant water lily (*Nymphaea odorata*). A system of vegetated dikes provides areas of dense vegetation adjacent to the water on several sides. The trees surrounding the pond are

primarily sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) and loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*).

Discussions with property owners and managers in the Santee Delta indicate sightings of Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks have increased dramatically in the past five years. This apparent increase in population along with numerous areas of potential nesting habitat may indicate a breeding population is developing.

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*Received 20 October 2011, accepted 15 January 2012*



## BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

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(All dates Fall 2011, unless otherwise noted)

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*Briefs for the Files is a seasonal collection of uncommon-to-rare or unusual North and South Carolina bird sightings and events which do not necessarily require a more detailed Field Note or article. Reports of your sightings are due the 20th of the month after the end of the previous season.*

Winter	December 1–February 28	due March 20
Spring	March 1–May 31	due June 20
Summer	June 1–July 31	due August 20
Fall	August 1–November 30	due December 20

*Reports may be submitted in any format, but I prefer that you use email, list multiple sightings in taxonomic order (rather than by date or location), and type your report directly into the body of the email. If your sightings are in a file, please copy-and-paste the text into the body of the email, rather than sending an attachment.*

*Suitable reports for the Briefs include any sightings you feel are unusual, rare, noteworthy, or just plain interesting to you in any way! It is my responsibility to decide which reports merit inclusion in the Briefs.*

*Please be sure to include details of any rare or hard-to-identify birds.*

*I rely in part on sightings reported in Carolinabirds. Please don't, however, rely on me to pick up your sightings from Carolinabirds. Instead, please also send your sightings directly to me as described above.*

*If I feel that your sighting warrants a Field Note, I will contact either you or the appropriate state Field Notes editor. You may, of course, submit your Field Note directly to the editor without going through me.*

**Black-bellied Whistling-Duck:** One at a private impoundment on the North River, Carteret County (Co), NC, from July to November (*fide* John Fussell) was thought to have been of wild origin. 30+ were at Donnelley Wildlife Management Area (WMA), SC, 30 Sept (Paul Serridge, et al.).

**Greater White-fronted Goose:** Steve Calver found a flock of 13 Greater White-fronted Geese at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 14 Oct.

**Snow Goose:** Individuals were found mixed with a flock of Canada Geese at a sod farm in New Bern, NC, very early, 31 Aug–1 Sept (Al

Gamache); foraging with Canada Geese in Wilmington, NC, 13 Oct (Bruce Smithson); at the upper end of Jordan Lake, NC, 20 Oct (Mike McCloy, Brent Mills); and at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 20 Oct–2 Nov (Steve Calver). Nine had returned to Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), NC, by 11 Oct (Audrey Whitlock).



Ross's Goose, 23 Oct 2011, Cary, NC.  
Photo by Robert Meehan.

adjacent New Field, 2 Nov (Peggy Eubank, Audrey Whitlock); at the nearby Bodie Island Lighthouse Pond, during the Wings Over Water Festival (W.O.W.), 12 Nov (Whitlock, m. obs.). Two drakes were seen at New Field, Pea Island NWR, NC 13 Nov (Ricky Davis, Jeff Pippen).

**Northern Shoveler:** A juvenile shoveler on Busbee Lake in Conway, SC, 21 Aug (Stephen Thomas) was quite early.

**Surf Scoter:** Monroe Pannell found a female on Lake Hickory, NC, 30 Oct.



White-winged Scoter, 19 Nov 2011, Lake Junaluska, NC. Photo by Connie Wulkowicz.

**Ross's Goose:** A juvenile bird, found on a small subdivision pond with a small flock of Canada Geese in W Cary, NC, 21 Oct (Jennifer Schrand) was seen and photographed by many through 14 Nov (Schrand, multiple observers (m. obs.)).

**Tundra Swan:** Locally unusual was one seen on the upper end of Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 5 Nov (Scott Winton).

**Gadwall:** 100+ on Lake Osceola in Henderson Co, NC, 16 Nov (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey) was a record number for that county.

**Eurasian Wigeon:** Individual drakes were seen at Pea Island NWR, NC, 1 Nov (*vide* Jeff Lewis);

**White-winged Scoter:** Inland sightings involved an adult male on Lake Hickory, Catawba Co, NC, 4 Nov (Dwayne Martin, Monroe Pannell, Mike McCloy) and a first-year bird photographed on Lake Junaluska, NC, 19 Nov (Connie Wulkowicz).

**Red-breasted Merganser:** Locally unusual was one at Saluda Shoals Park

in Lexington, SC, 18 Sep (Patricia Voelker).

**Pacific Loon:** 2+ were reported on Lake Hartwell, near the South Carolina/Georgia border, 20 Nov (Mark McShane). This site has hosted this species for several winters.

**Herald (Trindade) Petrel:** Two, one light-morph and one intermediate/dark-morph, were seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, NC, 7 Aug (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Fea's Petrel:** One was seen during a fishing charter off Oregon Inlet, NC, 10 Sep (Jamie Cameron, *fide* Brian Patteson).

**Wilson's Storm-Petrel:** One was seen from the beach at Emerald Isle, NC, 24 Aug (John Voigt). Interestingly, no inland sightings were made after the passage of Hurricane Irene.

**Wood Stork:** Sightings on inland lakes included one on the upper end of Falls Lake, NC, 16 Aug (James Meehan, Robert Meehan, Kyle Kittelberger); 53 at the same location, 3 Sep (Erla Beegle, et al.); 20 at Popes Lake, near Angier, NC, 20 Aug (Erla Beegle, et al.); 13 at Jordan Lake, NC, 10 Sep (Peter Perlman, et al.); 15 at the same location, 24 Sep (Tom Driscoll, et al.); and six remaining at Jordan Lake until 20 Oct (Mike McCloy, Brent Mills). Individuals were also reported near Ware Shoals, Laurens Co, SC, 19 Aug (Chris Sermons); on the lakes just N of Greensboro, NC, a juvenile, 21 Aug through 3 Sep (Henry Link, et al.); flying over the Tidewater Research Station in Roper, NC, 5 Sep (Peggy Eubank); and in a yard in Hatteras, NC, an injured juvenile, 4 Nov (Kate Sutherland).

**Magnificent Frigatebird:** Individual juveniles were seen during a fishing charter, three miles W–SW of Hatteras Inlet, NC 18 Aug (Brian Patteson) and flying N over the spit at Ft Fisher, NC, 31 Aug (Bruce Smithson).

**Masked Booby:** An individual was photographed off Oregon Inlet, NC, during pelagic trips out of Wanchese, NC, 20 and 24 Aug (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Brown Booby:** A juvenile, well-photographed at Barden's Inlet, Cape Lookout, NC, 11 Aug (Jeffrey Maw, *fide* John Fussell), was seen again on a buoy off Cape Lookout, 20 Aug (Jon Altman, *fide* Fussell), and, presuming it's the same individual, was spotted a third time, near the jetty at Cape Lookout, 12 Sep (Ron White, *fide* Fussell).

**Great Cormorant:** One was seen at the groin at Masonboro Inlet, Wrightsville Beach, NC, 12 Oct (Dean Edwards). A juvenile was seen near the old ferry landing at Oregon Inlet, NC, 31 Oct, and up to three were seen there by December (Audrey Whitlock).

**Anhinga:** Locally unusual were 14 at Popes Lake, near Angier, NC, 20 Aug (Erla Beegle, et al.) and one at the upper end of Falls Lake, NC, 20 Aug (Kent Fiala, et al.). Two at Mattamuskeet NWR, 8 Nov (Audrey Whitlock) were somewhat late.

**American White Pelican:** One was seen in flight over the Tidewater Research Station in Roper, NC, 13 Sep (Alan Meijer). Nine had returned to Pea Island NWR, NC, by 11 Oct (Audrey Whitlock). A flock of 42 was seen



near Englehard, NC, 24 Nov (Jeff Lewis). The fall high count at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, was 101, 20 Oct (Steve Calver).

**American Bittern:** Sightings outside of the coastal plain included individuals in a grassy field in Hurdle Mills, Orange Co, NC, 22 Oct (Dave Snyder); at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville, SC, 3–21 Nov (Paul Serridge, et al.); and in Jackson Park, Hendersonville, SC, 6 Nov (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey).

**Least Bittern:** Quite a surprise was an individual at Jackson Park, Hendersonville, NC, 27–29 Sep (John Lindfors, m. obs.).

**“Great White Heron”:** One found along the Eno River in Durham, NC, 19 Nov (Tom Driscoll) remained in that area into the winter period (m. obs.).

**Snowy Egret:** Inland sightings included one at Lake Wheeler, Raleigh, NC, 3 Aug (Steve Shultz); four on the upper end of Falls Lake, NC, 26 Aug (Brian Bockhahn); and four on Jordan Lake, NC, during the Chatham Co Fall Bird Count (FBC), 17 Sep (Will Cook, Jeff Pippen).

**Tricolored Heron:** Rare inland, a Tricolored Heron was seen at Falls Lake, NC, 8 Aug (Thierry Besançon) through 21 Sep (Brian Bockhahn).

**Reddish Egret:** Sightings included one at Ft Fisher, NC, 5 Aug (Amy Williamson) through 30 Oct (Ed Corey); one at the Rachel Carson National Reserve, near Beaufort, NC, 11 Aug (*fide* John Fussell) through 29 Aug (Paula Gillikin); two juveniles near the Ocracoke [NC] Ferry Terminal, 14 Aug (James Meehan, Robert Meehan); three near the Cedar Island [NC] Ferry Terminal, 14 Aug (Fussell, Jack Fennell, Matt Gould); and up to two juveniles at Huntington Beach State Park (SP), 6 Sep (Peter Stangel) through 9 Oct (Jack Peachey, et al.).

**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** Sightings outside of the coastal plain included an adult at the upper end of Falls Lake, NC, 4 Aug (Robert Meehan, Scott Winton) and a juvenile at Salem Lake, Winston-Salem, NC, 5 Oct (Phil Dickinson).

**Glossy Ibis:** One in the marshes at the N end of Oregon Inlet, 12 Nov (Mike McCloy, Ali Iyoob), and two at North River Farms, Carteret Co, NC, 20 Nov (John Fussell, et al.) were somewhat late.



Roseate Spoonbills, 8 Sept 2011, Huntington Beach SP. Photo by Jerry Kerschner.

**Roseate Spoonbill:** The fall high count at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, was 116 on 11 Aug (Steve Calver). Ten birds remained at the site until 20 Oct (Calver). Three were present at Huntington Beach SP, SC, 7 Sep (Bob Maxwell) and one remained at the park until at least 22 Oct (Judy Walker, et al.). Five were seen on a pond at Bear Island WMA, SC, 30



Sep (Paul Serridge).

**Osprey:** Late for a site in the piedmont, an Osprey was seen in Greensboro, NC, 17 Nov (*fide* Henry Link).

**Swallow-tailed Kite:** A couple of the more unusual sightings involved one in flight five miles E of Columbia, Tyrrell Co, NC, 11 Aug (Matthew King) and two in flight over a field off US-64, five miles S of Morganton, NC, 17 Aug (Adrienne Wallace, Richard Ferguson).

**Mississippi Kite:** Outside of the species' typical range were three seen in flight over Huntersville, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 14 Aug (Kevin Metcalf); a family group of five, two adults and three juveniles, possibly the same birds seen in Huntersville, in nearby Davidson, NC, 16 Aug (Tomm Lorenzin); and up to 13 in the Mills River area of Henderson Co, NC, 20–27 Aug (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey, m. obs.). An individual in flight near downtown Raleigh, NC, 12 Oct (John Connors) was somewhat late.

**Northern Harrier:** Early sightings involved a juvenile along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 7 Sep (Simon Thompson); an individual at the upper end of Falls Lake, NC, 11 Sep (Scott Winton); and one at Patriot's Point, Mt Pleasant, SC, 16 Sep (John Cox).

**Northern Goshawk:** An adult seen in flight over Borrow Pit Rd, Alligator River NWR, NC, 12 Nov (Jeff Lewis) was a great sighting of an elusive species.

**Golden Eagle:** Individuals were seen at the upper end of Falls Lake, NC, 15 Sep (Dave Lenat); during a hawk watch at Grandfather Mountain, NC, 23 Sep (Jesse Pope, et al.); and in the Lake Landing area of Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, an adult, 24 Nov (Jeff Lewis).

**Merlin:** Inland sightings included one at Jordan Lake, NC, 17 Sep (Jeff Pippen) and 16 Oct (Tom Driscoll); at Falls Lake, NC, 21 Sep and 9 Oct (*fide* Brian Bockhahn); one at St Stephens Park in NE Hickory, NC, 25 Sep (Dwayne Martin); four at Mt Mitchell SP, NC, 7 Oct (Marilyn Westphal, Mark Simpson); and one along Mid Pines Rd in Raleigh, NC, 25 Nov (Harry LeGrand).

**Peregrine Falcon:** One returned to the sign atop the Hilton in downtown Charlotte, NC, for a sixth straight winter, 15 Oct (Anne Clark, *fide* Ron Clark)

**Clapper Rail:** A juvenile, presumably a migrant forced down by Hurricane Irene, was photographed as it perched on a windowsill in downtown High Point, NC, 29 Aug (Carma Loftin, *fide* Hop Hopkins). A juvenile was also taken in by a wildlife rehabilitator in Huntersville, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 17 Sep (*fide* Taylor Piephoff).

**American Coot:** One photographed in a dirt parking lot on Big Bald, Yancey Co, NC, 23 Oct (Chris Kelly, Corinne Diggins, et al.) looked quite out-of-place.

**Black-bellied Plover:** Eight seen along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 6 Sep (Wayne Forsythe) provided one of the better inland counts.

**American Golden-Plover:** Sightings included one on the mudflats at Lake Wheeler, Wake Co, NC, 20 Aug (Nick Flanders); one at the upper end



American Golden-Plover, 25 Sept 2011, Bladen Co, NC. Photo by John Ennis.

of Falls Lake, NC, 28 Aug through at least 21 Sep (m. obs.); three at the same site 15 Sep (Dave Lenat); two at the Super Sod farm in Orangeburg, SC, 8 Sep (Chris Feeney); 12 in the wetland restoration area of North River Farms, Carteret Co, NC, 11 Sep (John Fussell, Jack Fennell); one on the mudflats at Lake Townsend, Guilford Co, NC, 12 Sep (Julien McCarthy, et al.); one on the Aiken Co, SC, FBC, 17 Sep (*fide* Anne Waters, Lois Stacey); one in the Mountain Creek area of

Lake Norman, Catawba Co, NC, 18–20 Sep (Dwayne Martin, Monroe Pannell); one on the lawn at the Oregon Inlet [NC] Fishing Center, 19 Sep (Jeff Lewis) and 20 Sep (Audrey Whitlock); one (low compared to past years) at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 22 Sep (Steve Calver); two at Oakland Plantation Turf Farm in Bladen Co, NC, 25 Sep (John Ennis); two on the Ellerbe Creek mudflats of Jordan Lake, NC, 2 Oct (Robert Meehan); one at Savannah NWR, SC, 2 Oct (Ron Clark, et al.); two at Huntington Beach SP, SC, 22 Oct (Ron Clark, et al.);

**Semipalmated Plover:** Inland sightings included 39 on the upper end of Falls Lake, NC, 21 Aug (Steve Shultz); 35 at the same location, 22–31 Aug (Dave Lenat); two along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 6 Sep (Wayne Forsythe, Bob Olthoff); 13 at the same site, 7 Sep (Simon Thompson); ten at Jordan Lake, NC, during the Chatham Co FBC, 17 Sep (*fide* Will Cook); and two in the Mountain Creek area of Lake Norman, Catawba Co, NC, 20 Sep (Dwayne Martin, Monroe Pannell).

**Piping Plover:** Rare so far inland, a Piping Plover was seen on the upper end of Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 22 Aug (Dave Lenat) through 28 Aug (m. obs.).

**American Oystercatcher:** One seen on the mudflats at the upper end of Falls Lake, NC, 18 Sep (Steve Shultz, Scott Winton) was a first for Durham County.

**Black-necked Stilt:** The high count at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, was 820 on 11 Aug (Steve Calver). Two remained at the site until 2 Nov (Calver). Locally unusual was one at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 16 Aug (Ali Iyoob, Mike McCloy) and two at the pond at the Cedar Island [NC] Ferry Terminal, 21 Aug (John Fussell, Jack Fennell).

**American Avocet:** Coastal high counts included 701 at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 22 Sep (Steve Calver) and 114 in New Field, Pea Island NWR, NC, 8 Nov (Brian Bockhahn, Dave Lenat). Inland sightings included one on the upper end of Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 6 Aug (Nate Swick) into September (m. obs.); two at the same location, 8–18 Sep (Robert Meehan, Scott Winton); two photographed at the Archie Elledge Water Treatment Plant (WTP) in Winston-Salem NC, 13 Sep (John Haire); and one on the New Hope Creek mudflats of Jordan Lake NC, during the Chatham Co FBC, 17 Sep (Jeff Phippen, Will Cook). Two seen in the wetland restoration area of North River Farms, Carteret Co, NC, 11 Sep (John Fussell, Jack Fennell) were locally unusual.

**Willet:** Rare inland, a Willet was seen on the mudflats at the upper end of Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 21 Aug (Matt Daw, Ed Corey) through 28 Aug (m. obs.).

**Upland Sandpiper:** Sightings included four juveniles at the Super Sod farm in Orangeburg, SC, 5 Aug (Peter Stangel); one at the American Turf sod farm near Creswell, NC, 16 Aug (Mike McCloy, Ali Iyoob); two at the same location, 26 Aug (Audrey Whitlock); and one on a lawn near the WTP in Goldsboro, NC, 10 Sep (Eric Dean, Gene Howe);

**Long-billed Curlew:** One was photographed at North Pond, Pea Island NWR, NC, 24 Oct (Albert Kuhnigk, *fide* Audrey Whitlock, Jeff Lewis) but never relocated.

**Hudsonian Godwit:** One was photographed in the Lake Landing area of Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 16 Aug (Ali Iyoob, Mike McCloy). Hurricane Irene-related sightings included three on the mudflats at Mason Inlet, Wrightsville Beach, NC, 27 Aug (Derb Carter); one photographed on the mudflats at Lake Wheeler, Wake Co, NC, 27 Aug (Andrew Scaboo); one found in a parking lot on the Morehead City, NC, Waterfront, 27 Aug (John Fussell); and five at Ft Fisher, NC, 27 Aug (Greg Massey, Sam Cooper, Harry Sell). Three were found foraging on the lawn at Ft Caswell, NC, 31 Aug (John Ennis).

**Ruddy Turnstone:** Inland sightings included one on the lakes just N of Greensboro, NC, 3 Sep (Herb Hendrickson, Henry Link); two on the upper end of Falls Lake, NC, 3 Sep (Erla Beegle, et al.); nine at the same location, 8 Sep (Robert Meehan); one, thought to have been forced down by Tropical Storm Lee, in Watauga Co, NC, 6 Sep (Curtis Smalling); one at Salem Lake, Winston-Salem, NC, 10 Sep (Carol Cunningham, John Haire); and a juvenile at Silver Bluff Audubon Sanctuary in Jackson, SC, 7–14 Sep (Peter Stangel, Justin Henningsen).

**Red Knot:** Rare inland, a Red Knot was seen on the mudflats at the upper end of Falls Lake, NC, 21 Aug (Matt Daw, Ed Corey) through 3 Sep (Mike McCloy, m. obs.).

**Sanderling:** Some of the better inland counts included 14 on the flats on the upper end of Falls Lake, 28 Aug (Scott Winton); five off Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 6 Sep (Wayne Forsythe); 18 on the mudflats of Jordan Lake, NC, during the Chatham Co FBC, 17 Sep (*fide* Will Cook); and two



juveniles in the Long Island area of Lake Norman, Catawba Co, NC, 23 Sep (Dwayne Martin, Monroe Pannell).

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** High counts included five at a sod farm in New Bern, NC, 31 Aug (Al Gamache); 21 at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 6 Sep (Steve Calver); 25+ at Silver Bluff Audubon Sanctuary in Jackson, SC, 7 Sep (Peter Stangel, Justin Henningsen); and 10+ at the upper end of Falls Lake, NC, 8 Sep (Robert Meehan). Somewhat late was one at the upper end of Falls Lake, NC, 6–7 Nov (Nick Flanders, Meehan); and two at Cape Point, Buxton, NC, 10 Nov (Audrey Whitlock).

**Baird's Sandpiper:** Sightings included one on the N end of Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 26 Aug through 18 Sep (Steve Shultz); two at the same location 4 Sep (Scott Winton); one (low compared to past years) at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 6 Sep (Steve Calver); two off Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 7 Sep (Simon Thompson); one at a WTP in Mecklenburg Co, NC, 12 Sep (Ron Clark, Tom Sanders); one seen and photographed at the Archie Elledge WTP in Winston-Salem, NC, 12–15 Sep (John Haire); and one at Silver Bluff Audubon Sanctuary in Jackson, SC, 14 Sep (Peter Stangel, Justin Henningsen).

**Pectoral Sandpiper:** The season's high count at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 50 on 11 Oct, was very low compared to past years (Steve Calver). Some of the better inland counts were 125 on the mudflats at the upper end of Falls Lake, NC, 13 Aug (Steve Shultz); 170 at the same location, 22 Aug (Dave Lenat); and 77 at Jordan Lake, NC, during the Chatham Co FBC, 17 Sep (*fide* Will Cook). Five at NPS Campground in Buxton, NC, 10 Nov (Audrey Whitlock), and one at the same location, 12 Nov (Jeff Phippen, Ricky Davis) were somewhat late to depart.

**Purple Sandpiper:** Eight were back on the jetty at Masonboro Inlet, Wrightsville Beach, NC, 12 Nov (Daniel Hueholt).

**Dunlin:** Rare in the mountain region, a flock of 15 Dunlin was found behind the VanWingerden Pond along NC-191 in the Mills River area of Henderson Co, NC, 28 Oct (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey).

**Stilt Sandpiper:** Some of the fall's better counts were 12 at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 14 Aug (Audrey Whitlock); 341 at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 25 Aug (Steve Calver); 11+ at the upper end of Falls Lake, NC, 26 Aug (Steve Shultz); and 30 at Mary's House Pond, Bear Island WMA, SC, 1 Oct (Paul Serridge). Locally unusual were individuals on the mudflats on Lake Townsend, Greensboro, NC, 31 Aug (Henry Link); at Silver Bluff Audubon Sanctuary in Jackson, SC, 7 Sep (Peter Stangel, Justin Henningsen); at the Archie Elledge WTP in Winston-Salem, NC, 7–9 Sep (John Haire); and with a flock of Dunlin along NC-191 in the Mills River area of Henderson Co, NC, somewhat late, 28 Oct (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey). Birds remained at Falls Lake, NC, until 30 Oct (Robert Meehan); and 25 at the Savannah Spoil Site until 2 Nov (Calver).

**Buff-breasted Sandpiper:** Sightings included one on the mudflats of Lake Brandt, Greensboro, NC, 21–31 Aug (Henry Link, et al.); two at the same location, 3 Sep (Herb Hendrickson, et al.); one on the upper end of





Buff-breasted Sandpiper, 24 Sept 2011, Bodie Island, NC. Photo by Jeff Lewis.

Falls Lake, NC, 28 Aug (Steve Shultz); four at the same location, 15 Sep (Shultz); up to 18 at Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 3–6 Sep (Wayne Forsythe); eight at the American Turf sod farm near Creswell, NC, 3 Sep (Mike McCloy, et al.) through 13 Sep (John Register); nine at the Super Sod farm in Orangeburg, SC, 8 Sep (Chris Feeney); 23 at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 11 Sept (Steve Calver); two at the same location, 11 Oct (Calver); one in the Mountain Creek area of Lake Norman, Catawba Co, NC, 15 Sep (Dwayne Martin, Lori Owenby); one on the lawn at the Oregon Inlet [NC] Fishing Center, 23–24 Sep (Audrey Whitlock), and one at Bodie Island, NC, 24 Sep (Jeff Lewis).

**Ruff:** One, in breeding plumage, was briefly seen near the pond at the Cedar Island [NC] Ferry Terminal, 7 Oct (Brian Bockhahn, Kyle Kittelberger).

**Long-billed Dowitcher:** One on the N end of Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 23 Oct (Scott Winton), was somewhat late.

**Wilson's Phalarope:** Sightings included 14 at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 5 Aug–4 Sep (Steve Calver); a juvenile on the upper end of Falls Lake, Granville Co, NC, 21 Aug (Steve Shultz); two at the same location, 22 Aug (Jacob Socolar, Scott Winton); one on the New Hope Creek mudflats on Jordan Lake, NC, 28 Aug (Jeff Pippen, Jacob Socolar); and three at Savannah NWR, SC, 2 Oct (Ron Clark, et al.).



**Red-necked Phalarope:** Inland sightings included one on the upper

Red-necked Phalarope, 6 Sep 2011, Henderson Co, NC. Photo by Wayne Forsythe.

end of Falls Lake, NC, 13 Aug (Steve Shultz); four photographed together at the same location 22 Aug (Scott Winton); three at the same location 15 Sep (Dave Lenat); a juvenile on the mudflats of Lake Townsend, Greensboro, NC, 30 Aug (Henry Link); one photographed in the Mills River area of Henderson Co, NC, 5–6 Sep (Wayne Forsythe); and ten at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 11 Oct (Steve Calver). 20 were counted on a pelagic trip off Oregon Inlet, out of Wanchese, NC, 4 Sep (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Red Phalarope:** Quite unusual was the individual photographed on a flooded lawn in Roper, NC, 17 Sep (Peggy Eubank).

**Black-legged Kittiwake:** A juvenile was photographed on the beach in North Topsail Beach, Onslow Co, NC, 21 Nov (Gilbert Grant).



Sabine's Gull, 4 Sep 2011, off Oregon Inlet, NC. Photo by Jeff Lewis.

**Sabine's Gull:** An adult in non-breeding plumage was seen and photographed off Oregon Inlet, during a pelagic trip out of Wanchese, NC, 4 Sep (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Bonaparte's Gull:** One found resting on a pier at Lake Waccamaw SP, NC, 27 Aug (Chris Helms) was somewhat early.

**Black-headed Gull:** One was seen and photographed at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 11–25 Aug (Steve Calver).

**Franklin's Gull:** A first-winter bird discovered off the Farrington Point Rd causeway over Jordan Lake, NC, 15 Oct (Thierry Besançon) was seen by many through 23 Oct (m. obs.). A first-winter bird was also photographed at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 22 Nov (Steve Calver).

**Sooty Tern:** Hurricane Irene-related sightings involved one flying over Mason Inlet, Wrightsville Beach, NC, 27 Aug (Derb Carter); two over Jordan Lake, NC, 27 Aug (Kent Fiala, m. obs.); and three over University Lake in Chapel Hill, NC, 27 Aug (Ali Iyooob).

**Bridled Tern:** Two, an adult and a juvenile, were found on the S end of Figure Eight Island, NC, during the passage of Hurricane Irene, 27 Aug (Derb Carter).

**Least Tern:** Eight on Lake Crabtree, NC, 27 Aug (Nate Swick) and 11 on the upper end of Falls Lake, NC, 28 Aug (Thierry Besançon), were found after the passage of Irene.

**Gull-billed Tern:** Two seen at a sod farm in New Bern, NC, 31 Aug (Al Gamache) were unusual for an inland site.

**Black Tern:** A couple of the better inland counts were nine on Salem Lake, Winston-Salem, NC, 18 Aug (John Haire) and 40 on Falls Lake, NC, from Sandling Beach, 18 Aug (Mike McCloy, David McCloy, Ali Iyoob).

**Common Tern:** Inland Irene-related sightings included two on Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 27 Aug (Nate Swick, Nick Flanders) and one on Salem Lake, 28 Oct (John Haire). Five on Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 29 Oct (Thierry Besançon) were especially unusual. One at Cape Point, Buxton, NC, 10 Nov (Audrey Whitlock) was somewhat late.

**Royal Tern:** Two on Lake Crabtree, NC, 27 Aug (Nate Swick, Nick Flanders) and three on the mudflats at Lake Townsend, Greensboro, NC, 30 Aug (Henry Link), a first for Guilford County, were found after the passage of Hurricane Irene.

**Sandwich Tern:** Somewhat late were 67 on the flats at Cape Point, Buxton, NC, 12 Nov (Ricky Davis, Jeff Pippen) and one on Oak Island, NC, 25 Nov (Mike Tove).

**South Polar Skua:** Two were seen off Oregon Inlet on each of three pelagics out of Wanchese, NC, 20, 22, and 23 Aug (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Pomarine Jaeger:** Two were observed at close range, harassing gulls and gannets in a huge flock off Cape Point, Buxton, NC, 12 Nov (Ricky Davis, Jeff Pippen).

**Parasitic Jaeger:** A dark-morph juvenile was found on Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 10 Sep (Jeff Pippen, et al.) and was seen again 11 Sep (Scott Winton, Ali Iyoob). Four were observed at close range, harassing gulls and gannets in a huge flock off Cape Point, Buxton NC, 12 Nov (Ricky Davis, Jeff Pippen).

**Long-tailed Jaeger:** Two were seen during a pelagic trip out of Wanchese, NC, 4 Sep (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Eurasian Collared-Dove:** Some of the higher counts were 15+ in N Iredell, Co, NC, 26 Aug (Ron Underwood); 20 in a yard in Morehead City, NC, 1 Nov (John Fussell); and 16 in Atlantic Beach, NC, 7 Nov (Fussell).

**White-winged Dove:** Sightings, seemingly increasing and all along the coast, included two at the turtle pond near the visitor center at Pea Island NWR, NC, 16 Oct (Jeff Lemons); two, presumably the same birds, in flight over the N end of Pea Island, 21 Oct (Audrey Whitlock); one in a yard on James Island, SC, 17–20 Oct (Barbara Spence, Keith McCullough); one in a yard in Manteo, NC, 24 Oct (Jeff Lewis); one at the Bodie Island [NC] Lighthouse Pond, 30 Oct (Denise Hargrove); two in a yard in Morehead City, NC, 28 Oct–5 Nov (John Fussell); one in the same yard, 25 Nov



(Fussell); one photographed under a feeder in Wilmington, NC, 1 Nov (Mark Jones); and one at a feeder in Conway, SC, 26 Nov–4 Dec (Gary Phillips).

**Black-billed Cuckoo:** Individuals were reported in a yard in Fletcher, NC, 24 Aug (Jon Smith); at Cowan's Ford WR, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 14 Sep (John Scavetto); at Jackson Park, Hendersonville, NC, 18 Sep (Simon Thompson); at Jordan Lake, NC, 24 Sep (Tom Driscoll, et al.); on Roanoke Island, NC, 28 Sep (Peggy Eubank); at Busbee Lake, near Conway, SC, 1 Oct (Stephen Thomas, et al.); again at Jackson Park, where photographed, 8 Oct (Mike McCloy, David McCloy); at Congaree National Park (NP), SC, photographed 16 Oct (John & Rhonda Grego); one in Brunswick Co, NC, 16 Oct (Greg Massey); and near the old Coast Guard Station at the N end of Pea Island NWR, NC, 21 Oct (Audrey Whitlock).

**Short-eared Owl:** An injured Short-eared Owl was seen on the roadside of US-74 near Shelby, Caldwell Co, NC, 5 Oct (Ron Clark), but disappeared before being rescued.

**Common Nighthawk:** Somewhat late were individuals at Falls Lake, NC, 9 Oct (Brian Bockhahn) and in Pineville, NC, 12 Oct (John Scavetto).

**Eastern Whip-poor-will:** One at Jackson Park, Hendersonville, NC, 18 Sep (Jon Smith, Simon Thompson) was locally unusual.

***Cypseloides*, sp. Swift:** A large, dark swift, presumably a Black Swift, was observed circling overhead from Hemphill Bald (5500 ft), along the E border of Great Smoky Mountains NP, Haywood Co, NC, 19 Sep (Derb Carter). The Bird Records Committee accepted the sighting at the genus level; it is the first record for any *Cypseloides* in North Carolina, although unidentified non-Chimney Swifts have been seen.

**Chimney Swift:** One on James Island, Charleston Co, SC, 10 Nov (Dennis Forsythe) was somewhat late.

**Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** 52 at Jackson Park, Hendersonville, NC, 1 Sep (Brad Dalton) was a great count for that site. At least ten remained in the greater Charlotte, NC area into late November (*fide* Taylor Piephoff).

**Anna's Hummingbird:** An adult male returned to a yard in Trent Woods, Craven Co, NC, for a second winter, in November (Art & Joanne Behrer). Banded on 12 Nov (Susan Campbell), the bird was seen by many well into winter (m. obs.).

**Rufous Hummingbird:** *Selasphorus* hummingbirds, all presumably Rufous Hummingbirds, visited feeders in Stumpy Point, NC, 6 Nov (Jay Ross, *fide* Audrey Whitlock); in Chapel Hill, NC, 15 Nov (*fide* Rob Gluck) into December (m. obs.); and in New Hanover Co, NC, 20–21 Nov (Amy Williamson).

**Allen's Hummingbird:** An adult male, originally identified as a Rufous Hummingbird when first observed at a feeder in Riverbend Park, N Catawba Co, NC, 18 Nov (Dwayne Martin) was discovered to be an Allen's Hummingbird when banded 19 Nov (Martin). The Riverbend Park Allen's Hummingbird, North Carolina's second record, was seen by many through 19 Dec (Martin, m. obs.).





Anna's Hummingbird, 12 Nov 2011, New Bern, NC. Photo by Susan Campbell.

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** Individuals were photographed near Pungo Lake, Pocosin Lakes NWR, NC, 11 Aug (Scott Winton) and at Ringneck Pond, Pee Dee NWR, NC, 5 Sep (Mike McCloy, et al.).

**Eastern Wood-Pewee:** One heard singing in the woods behind the new headquarters building at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 19 Nov (Jeff Lewis) was quite late.

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** Sightings included one in a yard in Leland, NC, 21 Aug (Greg Massey); one at Jackson Park, Hendersonville, NC, 3 Sep (Ron Clark) through 23 Sep (Simon Harvey); two at the same location, 8 Sep (Mike McCloy); one seen and heard at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville, SC, 8 Sep (Brad Dalton, *fide* Paul Serridge); one on the Bethabara Greenway in Winston-Salem, 14 Sep (John Haire); one seen and heard at Battle Park in Chapel Hill, NC, 17 Sep (Ali Iyoob); one seen and heard at Ribbonwalk Nature Preserve, Mecklenburg Co, 17–19 Sep (Kevin Metcalf, Ron Clark); one at the upper end of Falls Lake, NC, 19 Sep (Brian Bockhahn); one at St Stephens Park in NE Hickory, NC, 19 Sep (Dwayne Martin); and one seen and heard at Ft Fisher, 19 Sep (Greg Massey, Amy Williamson).

**Alder Flycatcher:** One was seen and, more importantly, heard calling, inside a mixed passerine flock, near the pedestrian bridge at Jackson Park, NC, 7–8 Sep (Ron Selvey, Mike McCloy). A juvenile was seen and heard calling at Lake Crabtree, NC, 28 Sep (Thierry Besançon).

**Least Flycatcher:** One at Mason Farm, Chapel Hill, NC, 16 Oct (Nate Swick, Greg Swick) was somewhat late.

**Ash-throated Flycatcher:** One photographed near the intersection of N Lumina and Parmele Ave in Wrightsville Beach, NC, 14 Oct (Dean Edwards) remained at that location until at least the next morning 15 Oct



Ash-throated Flycatcher, 11 Nov 2011, Alligator River NWR, NC. Photo by Jeff Lewis.

(Sam Cooper). One, first identified as a Brown-crested Flycatcher, found along Long Curve Rd at Alligator River NWR, NC 11 Nov (John Hammond, et al.) was seen by many through the afternoon of 13 Nov (Jeff Lewis, Peggy Eubank, m.obs.).

**Western Kingbird:** One was photographed at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 2 Nov (Steve Calver).

**Bell's Vireo:** One was photographed near the ferry landing at Ft Fisher, NC, 16 Sep (James Parnell). Amazingly, this sighting is Parnell's third of a Bell's Vireo in this area, during the past six fall migrations. [Previously, 21 Sep 2006, Carolina Beach SP and 1 Oct 2008, Ft Fisher (Parnell).]

**Warbling Vireo:** Along the coast, where rare, individual Warbling Vireos were found at Ft Fisher, NC, 17 Sep (Greg Massey) and in Corolla, NC, 3 Oct (Jeff Lewis).

**Philadelphia Vireo:** Sightings included two that hit a glass window on Hilton Head Island, SC, 21 Aug (*fide* Jack Colcolough); one in Halifax Co, NC, 8 Sep (Frank Enders); one at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 21 Sep (Thierry Besançon); a total of nine in Graham Co, NC, during the first week of October (Simon Thompson); one at Savannah NWR, SC, 2 Oct (Ron Clark, et al.); three along S Wayhutta Rd in Cullowhee, NC, 4 Oct (Mike McCloy); and one at Ft Fisher, NC, 3 Oct (Greg Massey) and 15 Oct (Amy Williamson).

**Common Raven:** Locally unusual was one heard at Jackson Park, Hendersonville, NC, 5 Sep (Mike McCloy). A pair was seen in flight over Durham, NC, 13 Sep (Greg Dodge) and 7 Oct (Robert Meehan). 14 were counted during a hawk watch on Pilot Mountain, NC, 14 Sep (Phil Dickinson, Ron Morris). Three were seen along I-74 in Randolph Co, NC, 26 Sep (Andrew Thornton). One was heard in Union Co, NC, 14 Oct (Bruce Sorrie). Up to three were seen at Riverbend Park, N Catawba Co, NC, 24–31 Oct (Dwayne Martin, Lori Owenby).

**Horned Lark:** Three continued on the bald of Bear Wallow Mountain, Henderson Co, 8 Oct (Wayne Forsythe) after successful breeding this past summer.

**Tree Swallow:** Eight at the Clemson Aquaculture Facility in Clemson, SC, 30 Nov (Derek Aldrich, Scott Davis) were quite late for that upstate location.

**Violet-green Swallow:** One was photographed in flight over a small pond behind an apartment complex in Chapel Hill, NC, 1 Oct (Ali Iyoob) but

never relocated. This sighting provides the first documented record of this species in our region.

**Northern Rough-winged Swallow:** Two seen in flight over Lake Raleigh, NCSU campus, Wake Co, NC, 29 Oct (Josh Southern, Sterling Southern) were quite late.

**Cliff Swallow:** One found amongst other swallows along Hooper Ln, Henderson Co, NC, 6 Aug (Wayne Forsythe) was locally unusual. 65 over Arrowhead Lake, Pee Dee NWR, Anson Co, NC, 5 Sep (Mike McCloy) was a good count. One reported at Huntington Beach SP, SC, 22 Oct (Judy Walker, et al.) was very late—could this bird have been a misidentified Cave Swallow?

**Cave Swallow:** One, seen in flight over soccer fields on the UNC campus, Chapel Hill, NC, 1 Nov (Ali Iyob), was the only Cave Swallow mentioned this fall.

**Barn Swallow:** Two of the later sightings involved a juvenile in flight over James Island, Charleston Co, SC, 10 Nov (Dennis Forsythe); and one in Greensboro, NC, 27 Nov (*fide* Henry Link).

**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** Apparently it is not an irruption year for this species in our region. One was heard at Riverbend Park in N Catawba Co, NC, 3 Oct (Dwayne Martin); and one was seen near the Bodie Island, NC, Lighthouse Pond, 7 Nov (Audrey Whitlock).

**Brown Creeper:** Two seen in the Jackson area of Aiken, Co, SC, 17 Sep (*fide* Anne Waters) were somewhat early for a site in the southern portion of our region.

**Marsh Wren:** 12 were counted at North River Marsh, Carteret Co, NC, 7 Oct (Kyle Kittelberger, Brian Bockhahn, et al.). Locally unusual were two at Jordan Lake, NC, during the Chatham Co FBC, 17 Sep (Will Cook), and one there 2 Oct (Robert Meehan).

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** Late individuals were noted at Jordan Lake, NC, 30 Oct (Nick Flanders, Elisa Enders) and near the boat rental tower on Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 29 Oct–5 Nov (Mike Turner).

**Bicknell's Thrush:** Possible sightings included one seen and heard calling at Ribbonwalk Nature Preserve, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 17 Sep (Kevin Metcalf); one photographed after hitting a window in Raleigh, NC, 4 Oct (Sharon Smart); and one photographed on Roanoke Island, NC, 21 Oct (Jeff Lewis). Bicknell's Thrush is very difficult to identify in the field, and these reports represent only possible sightings.

**Sprague's Pipit:** One was photographed at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 14 Oct (Steve Calver).



**Lapland Longspur:** One was seen on the spit at Ft Fisher, NC, 15 Sprague's Pipit, 14 Oct 2011, Jasper Co, SC. Photo by Steve Calver.



Oct (Deck Stapleton).

**Northern Waterthrush:** One at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 2 Nov (Allen Bryan) was somewhat late, perhaps attempting to overwinter at the site.

**Golden-winged Warbler:** Sightings included a female photographed along the Deep River Nature Trail in Randleman, NC, 30 Aug (Andrew Thornton); a female at Cowan's Ford WR, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 12 Sep (Kevin Metcalf); a female at Lake Conestee, Greenville, SC, 12 Sep (Paul Serridge, Jane Kramer, Brad Dalton); a male at Jackson Park, Hendersonville, NC, 14 Sep (Wayne Forsythe, et al.) through 27 Sep (Mike McCloy); a male at Cowan's Ford WR, 17 Sep (Metcalf); a male in Columbia, SC, 27 Sep–8 Oct (Mike Webster); one at Savannah NWR, SC, 2 Oct (Irvin Pitts); and an adult male at Ebenezer Point, Jordan Lake, NC, 1 Oct (Andrew Scaboo) through 8 Oct (Nate Swick).

**Blue-winged Warbler:** Three at Jackson Park, Hendersonville, NC, 19 Sep (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey, Jim Stone) was a good count. One at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 2 Nov (Allen Bryan) was somewhat late to depart.

**"Brewster's Warbler"** : One was seen along the canal at Mason Farm, Chapel Hill, NC, 11 Sep (Nate Swick, Greg Swick).

**Prothonotary Warbler:** One seen at Jackson Park, Hendersonville, NC, 23 Sep (Wayne Forsythe, Simon Harvey) was locally unusual.

**Swainson's Warbler:** One photographed at Bethabara Park in Winston-Salem, NC, 16 Aug (Phil Dickinson) was locally unusual.

**Tennessee Warbler:** Late individuals were noted in Greensboro, NC, 5 Nov (*vide* Henry Link); near the pond frequented by the Ross's Goose in the Stonewater neighborhood in W Cary, NC, where photographed, 13 Nov (Nick Flanders, Elisa Enders, Jennifer Schrand); and at the old spoil site on the causeway between Beaufort and Morehead City, NC, 25 Nov (John Fussell).

**Orange-crowned Warbler:** Sightings included an adult male in Graham Co, NC, 5 Sep (Cherrie Sneed); three at Patriot's Point, Mt Pleasant, SC, 16 Sep (John Cox); one photographed at Ebenezer Point, Jordan Lake, NC, 8 Oct (Mike Tove); and one at Cowan's Ford WR, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 24 Oct (Kevin Metcalf).



Nashville Warbler, 27 Oct 2011, Clemson, SC. Photo by Linda Montgomery.

**Nashville Warbler:** Late individuals were found along the Rocky Branch Greenway, NCSU campus, Raleigh, NC, 19 Oct (Nick Flanders) through 30 Oct (m. obs.); at Clemson, SC, 27 Oct (Linda Montgomery); in Huntersville, NC, 31 Oct (Kevin Metcalf); on Duke campus, Durham, NC, 1 Nov (Scott Winton); along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 2 Nov (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey); and at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 19 Nov



(Jeff Lewis), where it may have been attempting to overwinter.

**Connecticut Warbler:** Sightings included one seen near the park office at Mt Mitchell SP, NC, 31 Aug (Dwayne Martin); a female at St Stephens Park, Catawba Co, NC, 17 Sep (Lori Owenby); a female well-seen in Jackson Park, Hendersonville, NC, 23 Sep (Wayne Forsythe, Simon Harvey); and one in the Elizabethan Gardens on Roanoke Island, NC, 4 Oct (Audrey Whitlock).

**Mourning Warbler:** Sightings included a female at Jackson Park, Hendersonville, NC, 19 Sep (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey, Jim Stone); a first-year bird seen and photographed in the Elizabethan Gardens on Roanoke Island, NC, 19–21 Sep (Jeff Lewis); and a first-year bird at Yates Mill Pond, Wake Co, NC, 1 Oct (Josh Southern, Sterling Southern).

**Kentucky Warbler:** One in the Elizabethan Gardens on Roanoke Island, NC, 3 Oct (Jeff Lewis) was locally unusual.

**Northern Parula:** Late to depart were individuals on Duke campus, Durham, NC, 1 Nov (Scott Winton); at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 2 Nov (Steve Calver); near the entrance to Wildlife Drive, Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 12 Nov (Mike McCloy, Ali Iyoob); and at Lake Conestee Nature Park in Greenville, SC, 11 Dec (Brad Dalton).



Northern Parula, 11 Dec 2011, Greenville, SC. Photo by Brad Dalton.

**Chestnut-sided Warbler:** A good count of 25+ was made at Jackson Park, Hendersonville, NC, 15 Sep (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey). One on Roanoke Island, NC, 4 Oct (Jeff Lewis) was locally unusual.

**Blackpoll Warbler:** Three along the causeway at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 19 Nov (Jeff Lewis), and one there 24 Nov (Lewis) were quite late.

**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** Somewhat late were single females in Richland Co, SC, 5 Nov (Mike Webster); and in a yard in Raleigh, NC, 12 Nov (Kyle Kittelberger).

**Palm Warbler:** 5–10 in a yard in Orange Co, NC, 11 Aug (Norm Budnitz) and 12 at Alligator River NWR, NC, 2 Sep (Jeff Lewis) were good counts for such early dates.

**Canada Warbler:** An adult male in a yard in Orange Co, NC, 17 Aug (Ginger Travis) and one in a yard in Simpsonville, SC, 29 Aug (Len Kopka) were somewhat early.

**Wilson's Warbler:** 2–3 at Jackson Park, Hendersonville, NC, 19 Sep (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey) was a good count. One in the Elizabethan Gardens on Roanoke Island, NC, 14 Nov (Jeff Lewis) and a first-year bird in Aynor, SC, 24 Nov (Stephen Thomas) were both quite late.

**Clay-colored Sparrow:** Sightings included one in the “brush-pile” at Patriot's Point, Mt Pleasant, SC, 13 Sep (John Cox); two at the same location, 17–24 Sep (Cox, et al.); an adult in Jackson Co, NC, 14 Sep (Jeremy Hyman); one at Ft Fisher, NC, 19 Sep (Daniel Hueholt, et al.)

through 15 Oct (Greg Massey); one in Wrightsville Beach, NC, 16 Oct (Harry LeGrand, Jeff Pippen); two at Pea Island NWR, NC, 16 Oct (Jeff Lemons, Jeff Lewis); and one at Jackson Park, Hendersonville, NC, 17–18 Oct (Ron Selvey, Wayne Forsythe);

**Vesper Sparrow:** Sightings included two well-seen along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 27 Oct (Wayne Forsythe); “several” on the Ellerbe Creek flats of Falls Lake, NC, 30 Oct (Robert Meehan, et al.); and 4–5 off Baywater Drive in Aynor, SC, 6 Nov (Stephen Thomas).

**Lark Sparrow:** Singles were found at Savannah NWR, SC, 13 Aug (Jack Colcolough); in Folly Beach, SC, 29 Aug (Andy Jones); at Coquina Beach, Bodie Island, NC, 12 Oct (Jeff Shenot, *fide* Audrey Whitlock); and at Pinckney Island NWR, SC, 23 Oct (Netanel Paley, et al.).

**Le Conte’s Sparrow:** Two were seen at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 22 Nov (Steve Calver). One was seen at North River Farms, Carteret Co, NC, 27 Nov (John Fussell, Jack Fennell, Matt Gould, John Voigt).



Lincoln’s Sparrow, 6 Oct 2011, Bryson City, NC.  
Photo by Michael McCloy.

**Lincoln’s Sparrow:**

Sightings included three at Ferguson Fields near Bryson City, NC, 6 Oct (Mike McCloy); four at the same location, 9 Oct (McCloy); two at Alligator River NWR, NC, during a “big sit” 9 Oct (Jeff Lewis, Audrey Whitlock); one in the wetland at Tanglewood Park, Forsyth Co, NC, 24 Oct (John Haire); one at Cowan’s Ford WR, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 25 Oct (Kevin Metcalf); three along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co,

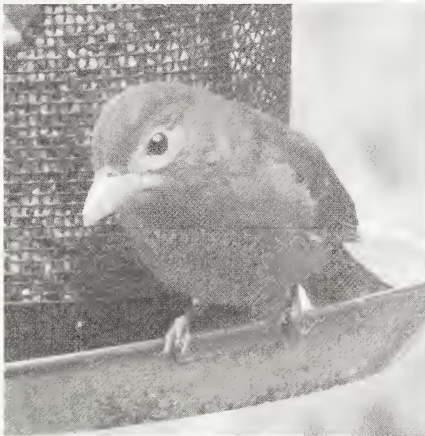
NC, 26 Oct (Wayne Forsythe); one at the usual spot on Leggett Rd, W Edgecombe Co, 30 Oct (Ricky Davis); and two near Beaufort, NC, 30 Nov (John Fussell).

**White-throated Sparrow:** One under a feeder in a yard in Raleigh, NC, 11 Aug (John Connors) was either extremely early or had over-summered in the area.

**White-crowned Sparrow:** Some of the higher counts were three on Bald Head Island, NC, 15 Oct (John Ennis, et al.); 16+ at Ft Fisher, NC, 15 Oct (Amy Williamson, Greg Massey); six at North River Farms, Carteret Co, NC, 16 Oct (John Fussell, et al.); several in S Nags Head NC, 17 Oct (Audrey Whitlock); three at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 22 Nov



White-crowned Sparrow, 26 Nov 2011, Orange Co, NC. Photo by James Meehan.



Summer Tanager, 17 Dec 2011, Raleigh, NC. Photo by Dan Harvey.

(Steve Calver); and nine, eight adults and a juvenile, near Cane Creek Reservoir, Orange Co, NC, 26 Nov (Robert Meehan, James Meehan).

**Summer Tanager:** A female returned to a yard with feeders in Wilmington, NC, 26 Oct (Amy Williamson) for a fourth straight winter. A male returned to a yard with feeders in Raleigh, NC, for a second winter in a row, 23 Nov (Sue Harvey, *fide* John Connors).

**Painted Bunting:** A female specimen, presumably killed by a window-strike, was found on the UNC Campus, Chapel Hill, NC, 11 Oct (Ali Iyob).

**Dickcissel:** Sightings included a female/juvenile in the Paddy's Creek Area of Lake James SP, NC, 18 Sep (Jamie Cameron); a first-year bird at Butner Gamelands, Durham Co, NC, 1 Oct (Nate Swick); four at Ft Fisher, NC, 24 Sep (John Ennis); one at Hunting Island SP, Beaufort Co, SC, 1 Oct (Irvin Pitts); one at Ebenezer Point, Jordan Lake, NC, 15 Oct (Andrew Thornton, et al.); two on the N end of Roanoke Island, NC, 16 Oct (Audrey Whitlock); and an immature female in the Red Hill area of NE Edgecombe Co, NC, 28 Nov (Ricky Davis).



**Bobolink:** Some of the larger flocks reported were 2100 in the fields at Alligator River NWR, NC, 2–3 Sep (Jeff Lewis); 500 at Donnelley WMA, SC, 7 Sep (Paul Serridge, Irvin Pitts); and 500+ at Patriot's Point, Mt Pleasant, SC, 16 Sep (John Cox);

**Rusty Blackbird:** Sightings included 25 at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville, SC, 6 Nov (Paul Serridge, et al.); one near the Cold Mountain Overlook on the Blue Ridge Parkway, NC, (Marilyn Westphal, Mark Simpson); 40–45 at Jackson Park, Hendersonville, NC, 7 Nov (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey); 200+ at Lake Conestee, 15 Nov (Serridge); and ~100 near Falls of the Neuse, Wake Co, 20 Nov (Clyde Sorenson).

**Brewer's Blackbird:** One was photographed in a cattle pasture in SW Randolph Co, NC, 20 Oct (Andrew Thornton) but never relocated.

**Purple Finch:** Two of the earlier reports were of individuals at Bethania's Black Walnut Bottom Preserve in Forsyth Co, NC, 31 Oct (Phil Dickinson); and at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville, SC, 4 Nov (Paul Serridge).

**Red Crossbill:** Multiple crossbills were seen and heard along Clingman's Dome Rd and at Newfound Gap, Swain Co, 5 Aug (Irvin Pitts). ~10 were photographed ingesting grit along the side of a road near Smokemont, Swain Co, NC, 7 Aug (Pitts). Four were seen at Mt Mitchell SP, 2 Nov (Marilyn Westphal, Mark Simpson).



Red Crossbills, 7 Aug, Swain Co, NC. Photo by Irvin Pitts.

**Pine Siskin:** One banded at Hilton Pond, near York, SC, 6 Sep (Bill Hilton) was incredibly early.



## Book Review

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**Petrels, Albatrosses & Storm-Petrels of North America.**—Steve N. G. Howell. 2012. Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ. 483 pp. ISBN 978-0-691-14211-1. Cloth, \$45.00.

This very large book is reminiscent of several recently published books—*Gulls of North America, Europe, and Asia*, by Klaus Malling Olsen and Hans Larsson (2002); *Gulls of the Americas*, by Steve N. G. Howell and Jon Dunn (2007); and *The Shorebird Guide*, by Michael O'Brien, Richard Crossley, and Kevin Karlson (2006). Like them, *Petrels, Albatrosses & Storm-Petrels of North America* relies heavily on photographs, with each species typically represented by ten or more photos, mainly of individuals in flight. However, for most of these “tubenose” species (Order *Procellariiformes*), Howell includes photos of the species on the water with other species, for excellent side-by-side comparisons. There are also fairly detailed species accounts, roughly three or four pages in length for each species, along with range maps for most, including notation of the months of occurrence in selected parts of the range.

The author has spent many days travelling on pelagic trips out of Hatteras and Oregon inlets, NC, in addition to much field work in California, his home base. As a result, birders from North Carolina will be especially captivated by the hundreds of photos from that state in the book; most were taken by the author. Unlike with shorebirds, and more like with gulls, the taxonomy of tubenoses—the subject of the book—is still quite uncertain, and species splits have occurred in recent years, with more certainly to come in the near future. For example, the taxonomy of the Fea's (*Pterodroma feae*) and Zino's (*P. madeira*) Petrels is unsettled, as the former may consist of more than one species. Band-rumped Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma castro*) may consist of several species, at least two of which occur in the western Atlantic. An author of a book has free rein to designate and name whatever taxa he wants as full species or subspecies, and is free to split or lump as he pleases. For better or worse, Howell is clearly a splitter, and he assigns a current subspecies of Cory's Shearwater as a full species, the Scopoli's Shearwater (*Calonectris [diomedea] diomedea*). In fact, according to the author, this form occurs in some numbers in North Carolina waters; he states (page 113) that “Off North Carolina in May–Jun, no more than 5–10% of *Calonectris* shearwaters appear to be Scopoli's, but in Aug perhaps as many as 10–15% may be Scopoli's”. Hey, many of us have seen Scopoli's Shearwaters, without even knowing it!

I noted one error relating to the status of a species on the North Carolina list. On page 310, Howell lists records of Black-browed Albatross (*Thalassarche melanophris*) from Labrador, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Maine, Massachusetts, Virginia, and Martinique; but he then incorrectly states “... Additional sightings from Newfoundland s to Florida ... are not accepted, but some may be correct.” The NC Bird Records Committee has

long accepted a sight record of this species (onto the Provisional List) of two birds off Morehead City on 19 Aug 1972 (Am. Birds 27:739–740). I was one of six or seven experienced seabird observers on that trip who saw the birds. On page 271, Howell states that “A White-chinned Petrel was seen ... off North Carolina...”, on two dates in mid-October 1996. Though this report was not accepted by the NC Bird Records Committee, as he correctly states, I agree with Howell, Ned Brinkley, and Brian Patteson (who are mentioned on page 271) that “... it is difficult to imagine what else the bird could have been (the photo supported identification as a dark *Procellaria* petrel...)”. Nonetheless, I am concerned that he “accepts” the observation as “fact”, when it is not even on the state’s Accepted List. An author is free to be a “one-man records committee”, but by doing so he is setting himself up for criticism.

This book will undoubtedly be considered a major landmark in seabird literature. It is better for an author to be a splitter than a lumpner, in the sense that we get a very thorough treatment, both in photos and text, of all the possible forms of Band-rumped Storm-Petrel, Leach’s Storm-Petrel (*O. leucorhoa*), and the many small black and white shearwaters (*Puffinus* spp.) off the West Coast, as examples. He even has photos and some text on all of the extralimital species, such as various albatrosses, and thus it would pay seabirders to carefully study photos in the book before heading out on a pelagic trip. Of course, this book will need to be taken aboard, but as it has a hard cover that is not waterproof, you will need to store it carefully inside the cabin; you simply cannot afford to let this “tome” get wet! Despite my griping a bit at Howell for perhaps putting the cart before the horse, in terms of taxonomic treatment, this book is an exceptional work—just the photos alone are worth the price of the book. And, I admire not only Howell but all of the other photographers of pelagic birds, as obtaining high-quality photos of these quickly dashing species from a moving, rocking vessel is one of the most difficult aspects of ornithological documentation.

—Harry LeGrand

# CAROLINA BIRD CLUB

[www.carolinabirdclub.org](http://www.carolinabirdclub.org)

The Carolina Bird Club is a non-profit organization which represents and supports the birding community in the Carolinas through its official website, publications, meetings, workshops, trips, and partnerships, whose mission is

- To promote the observation, enjoyment, and study of birds.
- To provide opportunities for birders to become acquainted, and to share information and experience.
- To maintain well-documented records of birds in the Carolinas.
- To support the protection and conservation of birds and their habitats and foster an appreciation and respect of natural resources.
- To promote educational opportunities in bird and nature study.
- To support research on birds of the Carolinas and their habitats.

Membership is open to all persons interested in the conservation, natural history, and study of wildlife with particular emphasis on birds. Dues, contributions, and bequests to the Club may be deductible from state and federal income and estate taxes. Make checks payable to Carolina Bird Club, Inc. Send checks or correspondence regarding membership or change of address to the Headquarters Secretary. Dues include \$6 for a subscription to the *CBC Newsletter* and \$7 for a subscription to *The Chat*. Associate members do not receive a separate subscription to publications.

## ANNUAL DUES

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# The Chat

Quarterly Bulletin of Carolina Bird Club, Inc.  
1809 Lakepark Drive, Raleigh NC 27612



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